



Mid-America (HHS Region 7)

MHTTC

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network  
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

# Well-Being Wednesdays: Coping with Difficult Thoughts, Feelings and Experiences

Trainers: Andrew Jordan Thayer, PhD

March 10, 2021



MUNROE-MEYER  
INSTITUTE

***SAMHSA***

Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration

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The MHTTC Network uses affirming, respectful and recovery-oriented language in all activities. That language is:

STRENGTHS-BASED  
AND HOPEFUL

INCLUSIVE AND  
ACCEPTING OF  
DIVERSE CULTURES,  
GENDERS,  
PERSPECTIVES,  
AND EXPERIENCES

HEALING-CENTERED/  
TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE

INVITING TO INDIVIDUALS  
PARTICIPATING IN THEIR  
OWN JOURNEYS

PERSON-FIRST AND  
FREE OF LABELS

NON-JUDGMENTAL AND  
AVOIDING ASSUMPTIONS


RESPECTFUL, CLEAR  
AND UNDERSTANDABLE

CONSISTENT WITH  
OUR ACTIONS,  
POLICIES, AND PRODUCTS



# An Invitation





# The Adult Resilience Curriculum (ARC)

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# The ARC Modules



1: Understanding the psychobiology of stress and wellbeing  
(*psychoeducation*)



2: Creating safe and supportive environments  
(*context*)



3: Clarifying, aligning with, and committing to one's values  
(*values*)



4: Cultivating awareness through mindfulness-based practices  
(*mindfulness*)



5: Connecting meaningfully with others  
(*connection*)

6: Fostering pleasant emotions and experiences  
(*positivity*)

7: Coping with difficult thoughts, feelings, and experiences  
(*coping*)

8: Feeling good physically through nutrition, movement, & sleep  
(*health*)

9: Rejuvenating through relaxation, recreation, and routines  
(*three R's*)


10: Bringing it all together: A wellness plan for the future  
(*wellness plan*)

This is like your brain





# Strategies to Spark Joy

- 
01. paying attention to the positive
02. practicing gratitude
03. doing acts of kindness
04. connecting with others
05. experiencing humor
06. doing flow activities



# The ARC Modules



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(*psychoeducation*)



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(*values*)



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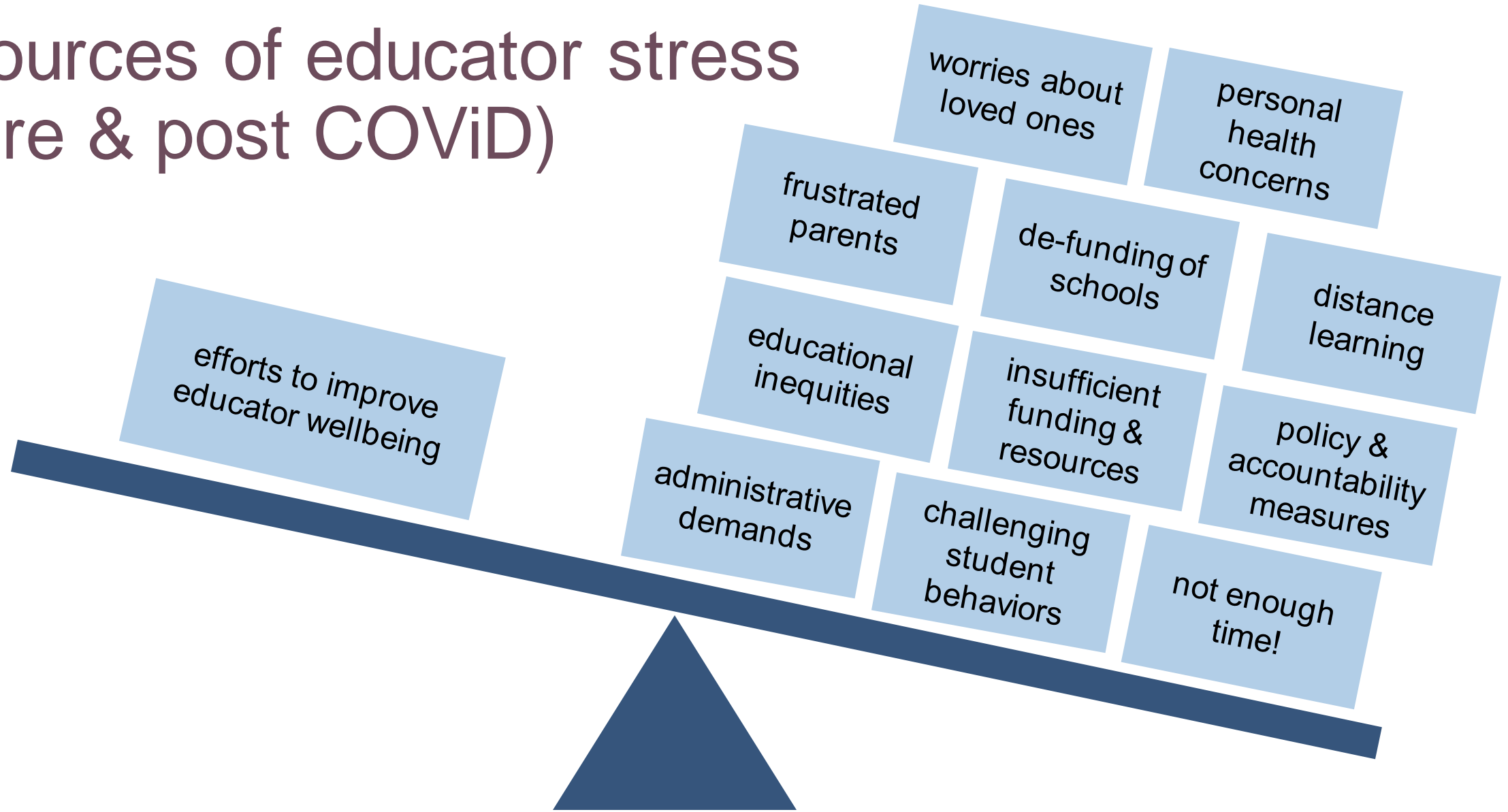
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(*coping*)

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(*health*)

9: Rejuvenating through relaxation, recreation, and routines  
(*three R's*)

10: Bringing it all together: A wellness plan for the future  
(*wellness plan*)

# Sources of educator stress (pre & post COVID)





**MODULE 7:**  
Coping with Difficult Thoughts, Feelings,  
and Experiences



# What are Emotions?

“

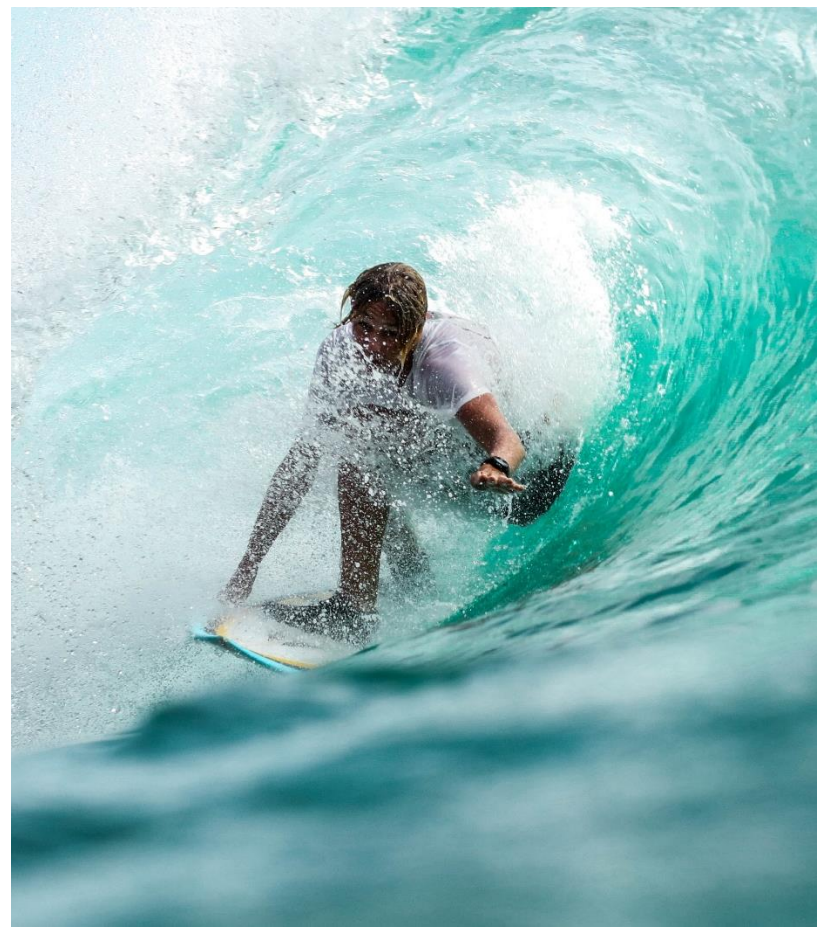
Emotion only lasts in our bodies for about 90 seconds. After that, the physical reaction dissipates, **UNLESS** our cognitive brain kicks in and starts connecting our [emotions] with past events.

”

- Jill Bolte Taylor



- ❖ A subjective experience
- ❖ Neither good nor bad
- ❖ Created by integrating bodily reactions and cognitive reactions
- ❖ Essential to being human



Embracing the Waves



**A**ware of inner  
experience

**N**ame what's happening

**D**escribe using an  
emotion

or “I cried last night.” When you name it, you feel it and it moves through you. Emotions need motion. It’s important we acknowledge what we go through. One unfortunate byproduct of the self-help movement is we’re the first generation to have feelings about our feelings. We tell ourselves things like, *I feel sad, but I shouldn’t feel that; other people have it worse.* We can — we should — stop at the first feeling. *I feel sad. Let me go for five minutes to feel sad.* Your work is to feel your sadness and fear and anger whether or not someone else is feeling something. Fighting it doesn’t help because your body is producing the feeling. If we allow the feelings to happen, they’ll happen in an orderly way, and it empowers us. Then we’re not victims.



# Orienting Towards Values

Ask yourself:

“Am I letting my emotions drive my decisions, or am I in the driver’s seat, using my values as a compass to direct me?”



# TIPP (During an Emotional Crisis)

**T**emperature


**I**ntense exercise

**P**aced breathing

**P**aired muscle relaxation







What questions do we have at this point?





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